

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA Employees

FROM: R. J. Dominic
Director, Finance Office/Comptroller

SUBJECT: Travel Advisory 03-5 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Asia, Canada Public Announcement, and Reduced-Canceled Airline Schedules)

Attached for your information are two notices from the State Department regarding (1) the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Asia, and (2) a Public Announcement to alert United States citizens of the declaration of a health emergency in Ontario, Canada, as a result of SARS. Also attached is a notice that we received from GSA that includes information on reduced or canceled airline flights (primarily international flights) as a result of the war in Iraq.

If you have any questions, please call Pat Oliver or Rachael Wivell on (301) 413-3060 x155 or x136, respectively.

SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS) IN ASIA

ISSUED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT MARCH 31, 2003:

This Public Announcement is being issued to alert Americans that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued a travel advisory and health alert notices, which are being distributed at ports of entry to people returning from the three SARS-affected regions. CDC advises that people planning elective or nonessential travel to mainland China and Hong Kong; Singapore; and Hanoi, Vietnam, may wish to postpone their trips until further notice. This Public Announcement expires on June 26, 2003.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are tracking SARS's origin and method of transmission as well as determining how its spread can be contained. In light of the continually evolving nature of the geographic spread of SARS, American citizens should regularly consult the CDC website <<http://www.cdc.gov/>> <http://www.cdc.gov/> and the WHO website <<http://www.who.int/>> <http://www.who.int/> for updates. American citizens currently in or planning to travel to SARS-affected areas of Asia should consult the Department of State's Fact Sheet on SARS <http://travel.state.gov/s_syndrome_factsheet.html>, Public Announcements, Travel Warnings, and Consular Information Sheets for China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Vietnam, all of which are available at the Consular Affairs Internet web site at <<http://travel.state.gov>>. American citizens may also contact the Department of State toll-free at 1-888-407-4747, or if calling from overseas, 317-472-2328, for SARS information.

See http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html for
State Department Travel Warnings

Canada Public Announcement
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

March 28, 2003

This Public Announcement is being issued to alert U.S. citizens to the declaration of a Provincial health emergency in Ontario, Canada. This Announcement expires on June 26, 2003.

On March 26, the Government of Ontario declared Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) to be a provincial emergency. The declaration follows the deaths of three individuals from SARS and the apparent manifestations of the disease in more than 50 individuals across the province. Canada is attempting to limit the spread of the outbreak by screening all passengers at airports for SARS symptoms. Health Canada sent staff to Pearson and Vancouver International Airports to help monitor passengers arriving on direct flights from affected areas for flu-like symptoms and to assist those who appear to be ill. Two major hospitals have been closed or restricted in the past 24-48 hours; other hospitals may also be affected. Ontario hospitals are operating under severe measures such as limiting access, restricting patient transfers between hospitals and requesting that those at risk of developing SARS place themselves under voluntary quarantine in their homes.

Detailed information on SARS is available from the Centers for Disease Control, <http://www.cdc.gov>, the World Health Organization <<http://www.who.int>> and the Canadian Health Organization, <http://www.health.gov.on.ca>>. A Fact Sheet for American citizens traveling abroad based on information from those websites is also available at the website of the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, <http://travel.state.gov>. Information from Health Canada is available at www.hc-sc.gc.ca. For further information on travel to Canada, please consult the Department of State's Consular Information Sheet, available on the Bureau of Consular Affairs home page at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. The U.S. Embassy is located in Ottawa, Canada at 490 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1G8, telephone (613)238-5335; website at <http://usembassy.state.gov/canada>.

See http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html for
State Department Travel Warnings

TRAVEL INFORMATION

EMBASSY CLOSURES AND REDUCED/CANCELLED AIRLINE FLIGHTS

U.S. Embassies in Middle East closed temporarily:
Several U.S. Embassies in the Persian Gulf region closed temporarily due to increased tensions in the area. Closures will happen periodically as security conditions warrant. Travelers are advised to check with the U.S. State Department's Web site www.travel.state.gov for specific status information about a U.S. Embassy location.

Ø International carriers reduce flights:
German airline Lufthansa said it was cutting flights to the United States and Asia, citing a sharp fall in bookings since the outbreak of war in Iraq. Lufthansa said it was putting off plans to expand its long-distance flights starting March 30, saying demand on trans-Atlantic routes had fallen "particularly sharply." Lufthansa said it would cut one flight a day on routes between Frankfurt and New York, Boston, and Los Angeles. Flights to Dallas and Phoenix will also be reduced, and smaller planes will be used for services to Philadelphia. Lufthansa said it was dropping plans to add flights to Nagoya in Japan and would use smaller planes to fly to Osaka and the South Korean capital Seoul. It also announced cuts on services to Caracas, Venezuela, and Johannesburg, South Africa.

Meanwhile, British Airways has cancelled flights to the United States and is due to announce further revisions to its schedules due to the ongoing Iraq war. Last week, British Airways suspended flights to Israel and Kuwait for safety reasons. The airline has reduced its London to Dubai services but for now is continuing to fly to Doha and Bahrain as well as to Jeddah and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.

Following is a summary of announcements by other international carriers:
Alitalia - Cancelled flights to Dubai, Beirut, Amman, and Damascus until April 13.

Austrian Airlines - Cancelled flights to Tel Aviv.

Gulf Air - Cancelled all flights to Kuwait.

Iran Air - Cancelled flight to Kuwait.

Japan Airlines - Reduced weekly flights on the Tokyo-Honolulu route to 14 from 21 in April. For May, flights will be reduced from 28 to 21 a week. Honolulu-Osaka, Tokyo-London, Tokyo-Hong Kong and Tokyo-Guam flights will also be reduced. Additionally, the seven weekly flights from Osaka to Paris have been canceled.

Jat - The national carrier of Serbia and Montenegro has suspended service to Beirut, Damascus, Dubai, and Tel Aviv.

KLM - The Dutch carrier cancelled flights to Amman and Kuwait.

Kuwait Airways - Temporarily halted flights to the United States, Europe, Iran, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

Olympic Airways - The Greek airline suspended flights to Alexandria in Egypt, Beirut, and Dubai after halting service to Kuwait ten days ago. The carrier also plans to reduce service to Cairo and Larnaca on Cyprus, and is keeping its options open concerning Jeddah and Tel Aviv.

Royal Jordanian - Cancelled flights to Baghdad.

Singapore Airlines - Said it would trim services to North Asia, the Middle East, and the United States, and possibly also to European cities.

Singapore Airlines will suspend 65 weekly services on key U.S. and European routes and to Mauritius as part of a cutback in flights due to the Middle East conflict.

Thai Airways - Some of its flights to Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait and Muscat will be suspended.

Turkish Airlines -The Turkish national carrier suspended flights to Kuwait from Istanbul.

Flight cuts and cancellations typically come without advance notice and often without public announcement and are usually effective immediately.

Mar. 28, 2003 - The following information is a follow-up to the Special Alert sent on Monday, March 24 regarding airlines' decreased capacity.

US Airways:

US Airways announced temporary changes to both its transatlantic and domestic schedules in response to the impact of the ongoing war in Iraq.

Transatlantic changes, effective April 1-30, 2003, will affect European operations to and from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Service between Pittsburgh and London (Gatwick) will be suspended for the month of April. In addition, eastbound service between Pittsburgh and Frankfurt will not operate on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and westbound service will not operate on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Eastbound Philadelphia-Amsterdam service will not operate on Tuesdays, and westbound service will not operate on Wednesdays.

Domestic schedule changes will be effective April 2 through May 3, 2003, and will affect mostly evening flights departing from Pittsburgh and Charlotte, N.C. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, the last bank of flights departing Charlotte will not operate. On those days, the last flights of the day will depart Charlotte between 7 p.m., and 8 p.m., ET.

The last two banks of departing flights from Pittsburgh will not operate on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between April 2 and May 3, 2003. On those two days of the week, the last departing flights out of Pittsburgh will depart by 6 p.m., ET.

Continental Airlines:

Continental changes terminals in Phoenix
Continental Airlines is relocating at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Effective April 1, Continental will open for business in Terminal 2 and operate from gates 6A, 6B, and 8. Continental has installed nine eService Centers at its new ticket counter to enable faster check-in for e-ticketed customers.